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**РАЗРЕШЕНИЕ**  
 1  
 ПРОШЕН

**IDENTITÄTSAUSWEIS N 0301**  
 Inhaber: *Derjabin, Sergej*  
 (Vor- und Zuname)  
 Staatsbürgerschaft: UdSSR  
 Unterschrift: *Derjabin*  
 Chief: *Derjabin*

**УДОСТОВЕРЕНИЕ №0301**  
 Серия ВК  
 Дерябин  
 Сергеевич  
 Комиссар

**VARIED IDENTITIES  
 OF WORKING RED AGENT**

U. S. PAT. OFF.

**MARCH 23, 1959**

**25**  
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**CENTS**





FIRST OF TWO INSTALMENTS

# RED AGENT'S VIVID TALE OF TERROR

A historic defection gives U.S.  
first full story of secret police

by PETER DERIABIN and FRANK GIBNEY

*For five years Peter Deriabin, a former officer of the Soviet security police, has been living in the U.S. Because of the sensitive nature of the information he brought to the West his presence has been a secret. Here his story is told for the first time. A more complete account will appear next fall in a book, The Secret World, to be published by Doubleday and Co.*

ON the evening of Feb. 15, 1954, four very nervous members of the Soviet intelligence network sat in Vienna, waiting.

Sergei Feoktistov, a Russian-born engineer who had lived for years in Austria, was at his regular table in the Graben-Cafe, a brightly lighted rendezvous for bridge and chess players on the corner of one of the city's fanciest shopping streets. Feoktistov was a Soviet undercover agent. The man he waited for was a ranking officer of Russian intelligence in Austria known to him as Smirnov.

On the other side of the city an attractive French citizen named Lisa Kotomkina sat in her apartment and from time to time dialed a familiar but very private telephone number, U6-1875. Lisa was secretary to Louis Saillant,

a top official of the Communist-dominated World Federation of Trade Unions, and she needed to change an appointment she had made for the next day. She had been scheduled to meet with a Soviet official and give him a complete account of her boss's office conversations. The official, whom she was now trying to reach, was a man named Korobov.

In the Hotel Imperial offices of the Soviet high commission (soon to become the Russian embassy) Counselor Evgeny Kovalev was expecting an official with an urgent report. Kovalev's prominent diplomatic position hid a much more important assignment: he was the head of the far-flung Soviet intelligence apparatus in Vienna. The man he was waiting for was his most valuable subordinate, who had been investigating a recent Soviet defection to the West. The subordinate's code name in the Soviet Union's State Security network was Konstantin.

In the embassy garage Anotoli Yel'limov, a chauffeur for the embassy by circumstance but a noncommissioned officer in the State Security by profession, was standing by, waiting for instructions from his superior, Major Peter

CONTINUED

**FLEEING HIS PAST**, the defecting Deriabin emerges in this symbolic picture toward a bright future in the free world from darkness of his life in Soviet State Security. Among his hateful tasks as member of secret police he had to post machine gunners at ceremonies (left) to protect Kremlin leaders from possible attacks by Russian people and help arrange kidnaping of eminent anti-Red (center).



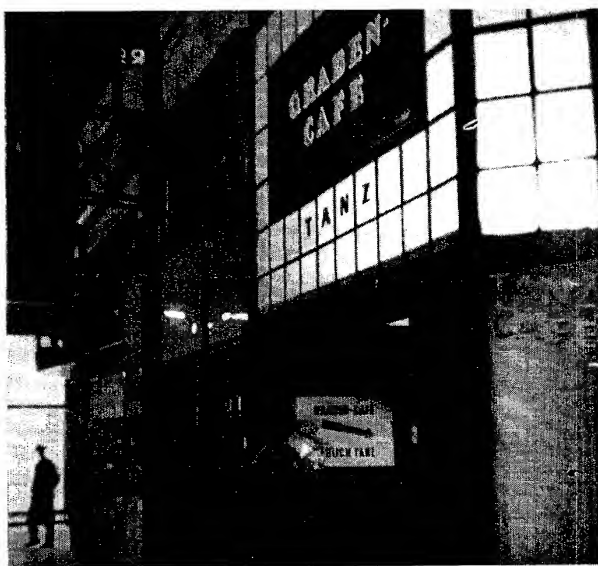
**IDENTITY CARD** of the kind carried by Soviet citizens abroad lists Peter Deriabin's occupation as "employee in the Soviet High Commission." This "cover" title insured him diplomatic protection but it masked his true position as a major in the Soviet State Security.

Harman Schmidt

## RED SPIES' VIENNA HANGOUTS



**PRATER PAVILION** in Vienna's amusement park is restaurant with outdoor cafe where Deriabin would meet agents. He once supplied 15 bottles of wine for some Soviet churchmen having party in upstairs room of building at rear.



**GRABEN-CAFE** in the center of city was a favorite meeting place for Soviet State Security operatives. Russian agents would drink wine, play bridge and chess with elderly cafe habitués while waiting for their contacts to show up.



**MOULIN ROUGE** was high-priced strip-tease joint where State Security officials sometimes took important visitors. To preserve decorum only wine was served at floor tables. Whisky drinkers had to move to nightclub's balcony.

### AGENT'S TALE CONTINUED

Sergeievitch Deriabin, local chief of Soviet internal counterintelligence.

The four nervous people were all waiting for the same man—and they would have a long wait. Two hours earlier, Major Deriabin—alias Smirnov, alias Korobov, code name Konstantin—had walked into a U.S. military headquarters in Vienna and asked for political asylum.

The Russian-speaking officer who interviewed Deriabin was as staggered by what he heard as were Deriabin's Soviet associates when they learned of his escape. For Deriabin was no ordinary defector. In crossing the border between the Communist and free worlds he had cut short a career which was taking him straight to the top of Soviet Communism's New Class leadership. Since childhood he had been a member of the Communist Party or its affiliated organizations, and he had risen to an important position in the Party. He was a four-times-wounded veteran of Stalingrad, a wartime graduate of the Soviet army counterintelligence school, a graduate of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism which trains high-level Party propagandists—and a survivor of 15 years of uninterrupted Soviet security checks.

But what made Deriabin's defection all but incredible was the fact that for the last 10 years he had been an officer of the dreaded Soviet State Security apparatus (now called the K.G.B. and formerly known as the M.G.B., N.K.V.D. and O.G.P.U.). Deriabin had spent the first five years of this period in the Okhrana, or Kremlin Guard Directorate, the Moscow organization charged with the protection—and sometimes the surveillance—of the nation's leaders. The role of an Okhrana officer is so sensitive that no former member of the organization is supposed to be given an assignment outside the borders of the U.S.S.R. But after his Okhrana service, Deriabin worked in the foreign intelligence section in Moscow, then got assigned to Austria during a period of bureaucratic confusion. At the time of his defection he was stationed at the Soviet embassy in Vienna. There his job, ironically, was to spy on his own people to make sure they did not leak information or defect to the West.

After 10 years in the State Security, Peter Deriabin looked back on his career and decided to defect himself. Within the Soviet world he held a position of rank and esteem. But to achieve it he had been forced to lie, cheat and plunder, and he found the thought of the future intolerable. So one day he walked out of the embassy and never returned. As far as is known, he is the only Okhrana member to escape from Soviet control.

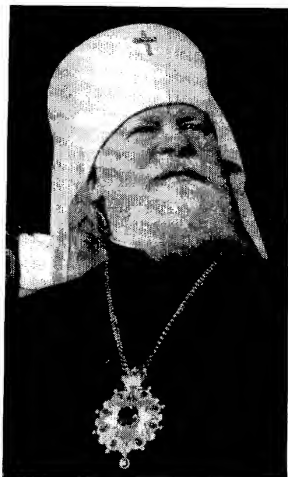
For the last five years Peter Deriabin, now 38, has been living under cover in the U.S. He hopes soon to receive his citizenship. As co-author of this article, he has chosen to refer to himself in the third person. Now living a new life under a new name, he feels no personal relationship whatsoever to the man who once worked for the good of the Soviet Union. Some of the information Deriabin brought to the West must remain classified, but what can be told comprises an unparalleled picture of Soviet intelligence operations, seen through the eyes of a man who played an important role in them.

Deriabin's story appears in *LIFE* in two instalments. This week's article describes his work with foreign intelligence in Moscow—the cynical formulation of policy, the engineering of the famous Linse kidnapping, the ruthless recruiting of agents to penetrate the West—and his counterintelligence work in Vienna, where his host of secret agents investigated not only prominent Soviet officials but even one another. Next week's article will describe Deriabin's experiences guarding the Kremlin leaders and his remarkable life as a member of the New Class. Altogether, U.S. experts consider Deriabin's revelations the most thorough single report on Soviet intelligence that the West has ever obtained.

### The depredations of Soviet spies

**T**HE foreign intelligence section of the Soviet State Security consists of a well-trained corps of some 3,000 operational officers in the Moscow headquarters and another 15,000 officers and civilian agents in the field. Almost no country in the world has escaped the depredations of this agency or its sister service, Soviet military intelligence. The U.S. and Britain in particular have reason to respect the Russian spy setup. There is little question that Soviet agents played a major role in robbing the West of its nuclear superiority. "If it weren't for our work in the U.S. and Canada," Deriabin heard the deputy chief of the State Security say in 1952, "the Soviet Union would still not have the atomic bomb."

When Deriabin joined the State Security's foreign intelligence early in 1952, its unpretentious headquarters was the old Cominform hotel building on Tekstilchikov Street in Moscow. Its various departments consisted of low-ceilinged offices packed with filing cabinets and numerous safes. Deriabin's department was the Austro-German branch. With almost 80 officers, it ranked next to the American branch in size and importance—an interesting indication of how obsessed Russia is with German problems. Deriabin quickly learned that the intelligence arm is one of the few agencies in the U.S.S.R. with direct access to the tiny group of men in the Central Committee's Politburo who rule the Soviet Union. One of the first questions he was asked (and it was clear that his

AGENT'S TALE CONTINUED

**PRELATE**, Orthodox Metropolitan Nikolai is agent in secret police.



**AMBASSADOR** Panyushkin was State Security official while in U.S.

## SOVIET AGENTS IN THE WEST

**S**TALE Security agents are planted in almost all Soviet agencies abroad. Most Soviet consuls and vice consuls are members of the Russian secret police; among other things their job is to prepare dossiers on visa applicants and try to force Russian *émigrés* in their areas to return to the homeland or enlist as spies. Other State Security officers are to be found in Soviet embassies and traveling delegations, where they keep an eye on touring Russians.

Since coming to the U.S. Deriabin has amused himself by spotting former colleagues among visiting Russians. When he saw the Moiseyev dancers perform in New York he spotted his old friend Lieut. Colonel Kudriavtsev sharing in the curtain calls as a member of the production staff. In 1957 a Soviet trade delegation to the U.S. included another State Security acquaintance of Deriabin's, Major Sergei Zagorsky. The major, listed as a "construction engineer," had once worked at the unconstructive job of amassing incriminating evidence for the Moscow dossiers of East German officials. A delegation sent to the U.S. in 1956 by the Russian Orthodox Patriarch of Moscow was headed by Metropolitan Nikolai Dorofeyevich Yarushevich, who is both second-ranking prelate of the Russian Orthodox Church and a State Security agent of long standing whom Deriabin once met in Vienna. During the Brussels Fair Deriabin saw a news picture of a group of visitors at the U.S. exhibit. One of them was a State Security man from his old office in Moscow.

Most Westerners underestimate the brazenness with which the State Security dispatches its agents. While Alexander Panyushkin was ambassador to the U.S. from 1947 to 1952 he was a major general on active duty in the State Security. He later became boss of the foreign intelligence directorate in Moscow.



**BRUSSELS FAIR VISITORS** examining a U.S. mail order catalogue included man (far right) who took State Security classes with Deriabin in Moscow.

entire future hung on the answer) was: "Can you write a good report for the Central Committee?"

The men working in intelligence were an extraordinarily sophisticated group. Well educated and widely traveled, they included a high percentage of technical specialists and accomplished linguists. (During World War II, for example, one State Security officer, Colonel Alexander Korotkov, had passed himself off as a trusted staff worker at Wehrmacht headquarters in Berlin. Later, as deputy director of Soviet foreign intelligence, he supervised the activities of such agents as the recently exposed Colonel Rudolf Abel and the U.S. double agent Boris Morros.) The foreign intelligence officers were a breezy, cocky crew, heedless of the heavy discipline that is usually found in Moscow governmental offices. They all had military ranks, but they rarely wore uniforms. Instead of greeting their superior with stiff salutes, Deriabin and his colleagues would call out a cheery "Hallo, boss!" in English. Among themselves they habitually referred to him, also in English, as "the Chief."

But the use of English did not denote any softness toward the English-speaking world. There was no nonsense about "peaceful coexistence" in this atmosphere—nor had there ever been. As far back as 1944, when Deriabin attended an Army counterintelligence school in Moscow, he had been startled to discover that U.S. and British intelligence methods were studied as intensively as the techniques of the German enemy. "Remember," the colonel in charge told his class, "your allies today are your enemies tomorrow." In 1952, in the Moscow of the Cold War, there was no question who "the enemy" was. Deriabin and his friends would talk endlessly about the operations of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency and other foreign intelligence organizations, speaking with the familiarity born of constant bitter rivalry. "Well, Peter," his friend Vasilii Romanovich Sitnikov, an expert on the U.S., would say, "old Allen Dulles has fixed us in Austria. But in Berlin . . ."

If these men had few illusions about Communism's Cold War aims, they had equally few about the system's internal flaws. They were too urbane to be fooled by the standard propaganda that poured from the Kremlin. As part of their job, they read the Western press assiduously, and their travels enabled them to make firsthand comparisons between the Soviet and Western systems. As Communist Party secretary for the Austro-German branch, it was Deriabin's job to exhort these worldly intelligence officers with the stock slogans about the glories of Marxism and Leninism. More than once he detected the beginnings of a smile among the members of his sophisticated audience.

But there was no protest from these officials. They knew Communism was not what it claimed to be, but they also knew that they were among its principal beneficiaries. Their elite status was reflected in their high salaries and perquisites: apartments, cars, long vacation trips, handsome summer villas, and many other things far beyond the reach of the average Russian. Deriabin's monthly salary was 4,200 rubles; the average engineer's was 1,500.

### The role of Russian intelligence

**D**ERIABIN quickly learned that his Austro-German branch, like others in the intelligence setup, had three functions, two of them obvious, one less so. In the course of its routine operation the branch was charged with: 1) seeking out intelligence information about Germany and Austria as well as about all allied military forces on the soil of those two countries and 2) watching Soviet military and diplomatic personnel and officials of the East German government for any signs of contact with Western officials. (It was not until 1953 that the State Security allowed East German officials to move out of their easily watched residential compound near Soviet headquarters in Berlin. Before that, they were in effect prisoners in the area.)

The third and less apparent mission of the Austro-German branch was one not usually associated with intelligence. Unlike Western intelligence organizations, the Soviet State Security makes policy as well as reporting on it. As part of this function, it engages in a wide variety of criminal activities—including assassination, terror and sabotage. Deriabin soon got a taste of this work.

In the summer of 1952 Europe and the U.S. were aroused by the abduction from West Berlin of Dr. Walter Linse, a respected lawyer and vigorous anti-Communist. Early one morning his neighbors had been startled by sounds of a struggle on the sidewalk outside Dr. Linse's home. There was a shout for help, followed by a shot. Passers-by, hurrying toward the scene, saw a man being thrown into the seat of what looked like a West Berlin taxicab. The cab was later seen speeding across the border into East Berlin. One of Dr. Linse's shoes was found on the pavement outside his house.

The Russians reacted indignantly to suggestions that they were involved in the kidnaping. The Soviet high commissioner in Germany appeared astonished when he was questioned about it by the U.S. High Commissioner, John J. McCloy. "You do not think, I hope," he

## A GALLERY OF SOVIET AGENTS



**SPY MASTER** in Vienna was Colonel E. K. Kovalev.



**DEPUTY BOSS** of Vienna agents was E. K. Galuzin.



**DERIABIN'S SUPERIOR** was Vladimir N. Pribytkov.



**EXPERT ON U.S.** was V. Sitnikov, now in Bonn.



**LADY SPY** was known to Deriabin as Suchkova.



**AT SOCCER MATCH** in Vienna, virtually entire intelligence contingent from embassy turned out to cheer official State Security team from Moscow, the Dynamos. They got choice seats. Those identified by Deriabin are: 1) Lieut. Colonel Anatoli Vlasov, a repatriation official; 2) Lieut. Valya Gavrilova, interpreter; 3) Colonel Mikhail Zhukov, who was engaged in Yugoslav intelligence in

Austria; 4) Mrs. Vladimir Korneyev; 5) Colonel Vladimir Korneyev, Austrian operations chief and second secretary of embassy; 6) Lieut. Colonel Ivan Guskov of the Soviet emigration section; 7) Lieut. Colonel Mikhail Gorchakov, an expert on U.S. affairs; 8) Major Aleksey Samozhenkov, in charge of French intelligence in Austria; 9) Colonel S. N. Zelenov, Austrian intelligence, now in

Bonn; 10) Major B. A. Solovov, Austrian intelligence, expelled from Italy last year for spying; 11) Mrs. Evgeny Galuzin; 12) Colonel Evgeny Galuzin, the deputy chief of State Security in Vienna; 13) Major Vitali Nikolayev, who worked with Deriabin in section concerned with security of Soviet colony in Austria. All State Security people held additional "cover" jobs in Soviet embassy.

### AGENT'S TALE CONTINUED

said, "that the Soviet Union would have any complicity in this plot!" The Soviet Union, of course, engineered the whole thing, with Deriabin's boss, Colonel Kovalev, supervising from Moscow. Here is the full story of the Linse kidnaping, made public for the first time.

In early 1952 Soviet intelligence found out that an anti-Communist German group, the Investigating Committee of Free Jurists, planned to run an international congress of lawyers in Berlin that August. The Soviet regime in East Germany had suffered much from the Free Jurists' activities. Through its own operatives, the Committee was sometimes able to learn when a man was being tried on faked charges in East Germany. Often the anti-Red organization was able to penetrate the operations of the East German courts and free those unjustly accused. The U.S.S.R. had become more and more irritated by this harassment, and the prospect of a world congress in Berlin, focusing attention on the criminal activities of the East German satellite, was the last straw.

Deriabin drew up a report outlining the activities of the Jurists. On the basis of the report the Soviet director of foreign intelligence ordered that the forthcoming congress be wrecked, preferably by taking action against its organizers. An order for the kidnaping of the Jurists' president was drafted by Deriabin, approved by his superiors and sent to State Security headquarters in East Berlin for action. (Like all such top-secret directives, the order was handwritten. Only Deriabin and three of his superiors saw it.) Then, just as the Soviet agents were about to move, the president suddenly left on an unannounced trip to Sweden, leaving his deputy Dr. Linse as acting head of the organization. The Soviet general commanding intelligence in East Berlin thereupon requested—and received, through Deriabin—permission to kidnap Linse instead.

On the night of July 7, East German agents of the State Security stopped a West Berlin cab driver in East Berlin, held him overnight on charges of black market activity, and transferred his cab's license plates to the kidnaper's car. Early the next morning three East German musclemen parked in the kidnap car near Linse's house. When he came out on his way to work, one of them asked him for a light. While he was fumbling for a match, another pinioned his arms and tried to throw him into the car. Linse struggled furiously, breaking free once and continuing the fight after he had been forced into the car. When he managed to get one foot outside the door, one of the agents calmly shot him in the leg. Then the car raced across the border to East Berlin.

Linse was immediately interrogated by the Russians. Wounded and

terrified, he was no match for them. His arrest was swiftly followed by a methodical hunt for agents and sympathizers of the organization throughout East Germany.

As the U.S. fired off protests to the Russians, the State Security received a plaintive interoffice communication from the Soviet Foreign Ministry: "With regard to the disappearance of Dr. Linse, we would like to know how we should reply or react." After checking with his superiors, Deriabin sent back a rather thin guidance reply: "We know nothing about this matter."

That was only for the record. At a higher level more guidance was needed. The deputy head of foreign intelligence telephoned the deputy foreign minister and said: "I think that it would be best to answer in this way regarding the Linse affair. Although they found his shoe in the West sector, this proves nothing. There is no other evidence. As for the car, it had a West Berlin license plate. So the whole business must have been instigated by people inside West Berlin." Subsequently, the Soviet high commissioner in Berlin disclaimed any knowledge of the Linse kidnaping, in notes to the West that said almost exactly what the State Security had ordered.

Deriabin meanwhile had written a report on the Linse operation for Georgi Malenkov, then deputy premier, and other Politburo members. He stated that the Free Jurists had been found engaged in "anti-Soviet" espionage under U.S. guidance, and that as a countermeasure one of the organization's leaders had been led to East Berlin and arrested. The words "kidnaping" or "abduction" were scrupulously avoided.

As for Dr. Linse, he was sent to a Soviet prison. Deriabin does not know where.

### Recruiting Soviet agents

**F**INDING agents to undertake such dirty work as the Linse kidnaping was no problem. While Deriabin was in Moscow, the Soviet Union had hundreds of agents in both Germany and Austria. Recruiting such agents was an important part of Deriabin's Moscow job. Behind his desk was an imposing array of filing cabinets, many of them filled with derogatory information about foreigners who might someday be blackmailed into becoming agents for the U.S.S.R.

Many of the best Soviet agents in Germany and Austria were recruited from among prisoners of war after World War II. A special team of State Security officers combed every prison camp in the Soviet Union looking for prisoners in four broad categories: 1) men who





**KIDNAP VICTIM** Walter Linse, well-known anti-Communist, was abducted from West Berlin in 1952 on Soviet orders. Only trace found of him was shoe (left) lying on sidewalk near his house.

## AGENT'S TALE CONTINUED

had informed against their fellow prisoners while in camp, 2) men with such good connections back home that they would be particularly valuable as spies, 3) long-term prisoners who would be likely to agree to almost anything to obtain their release, 4) members of Nazi intelligence or counterintelligence groups, well-trained operatives who presumably would work for anybody.

When a good agent possibility offered itself, the State Security spared no efforts to enroll him. A colleague of Deriabin's, Major Georgi Litovkin, spent six months tracking down a prisoner named Schmidt, a wartime German intelligence officer who was fluent in Russian and Polish. When Schmidt agreed to work for the Soviet Union, he was brought back to Moscow for instruction in Soviet intelligence techniques. There he was given a large room at the Balchug Hotel, all the money he needed, and the free run of the city—subject only to some unobtrusive surveillance. He had the pick of the State Security's own corps of party girls—a few dozen attractive working girls who had been so compromised politically (e.g., by being seen with foreigners) that they were grateful for a chance to have their moral compromises accompanied by a generous retainer. Ultimately Schmidt, now a full-fledged agent of the U.S.S.R., was quietly released with a group of legitimate German PWs returning to West Germany.

Even when the Russians had absolutely no intention of releasing a prisoner, they often tried to use a fake promise of his release to enlist one of his relatives. Soviet agents arranged a meeting in Germany with the wife of Colonel Hans Pieckenbrock, assistant head of the German Military Intelligence in World War II, and said he would be freed if she would help them. They showed her a forged letter, ostensibly in the colonel's handwriting, urging her to agree to this arrangement. The woman went to West German Intelligence and revealed the whole Russian plan. Thereafter West German agents kept her under watch during all her meetings with the Russians.

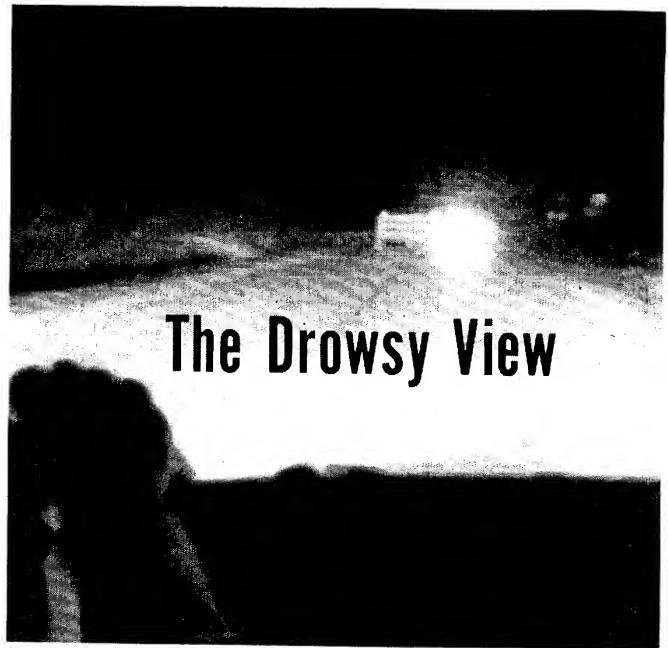
This would seem like a notable intelligence victory for the West, except for one detail: through Soviet agents inside West German intelligence, the entire surveillance procedure was reported to Moscow the moment it was arranged.

The outcome of the Pieckenbrock incident offers a curious example of what might be called counter-counterintelligence. It illustrates a major purpose of the Soviet espionage system: to get inside the West's espionage setup and make it useless. To accomplish this the Russians are prepared to go to fantastic lengths.

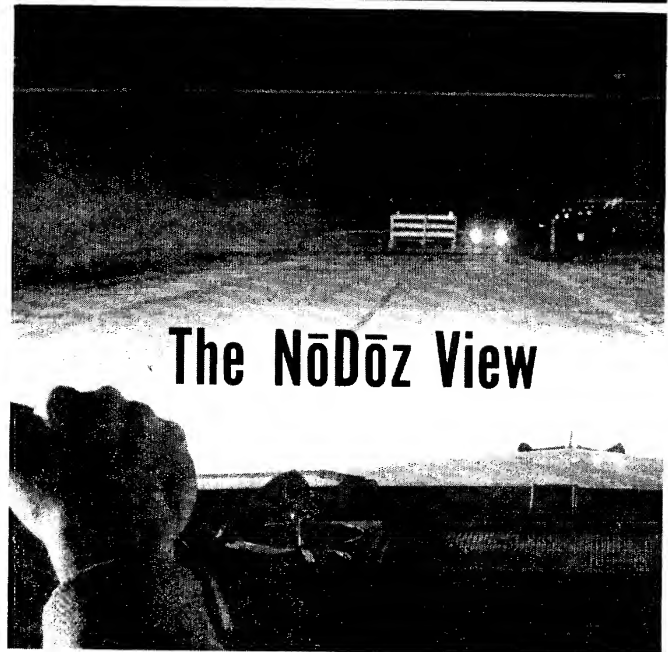
In 1952 they decided to find out how the U.S. "introduced its agents into Siberia," a matter which had sorely troubled them for some time. (Actually, it is doubtful whether any U.S. agents were there.) To achieve this, they decided to infiltrate one of their own agents into the U.S. intelligence setup. They picked a veteran informer with the code name John who lived in Vladivostok and was an expert on Siberia. Deriabin became involved because it was decided, improbably, to work John into the U.S. intelligence system through Germany. That way, figured the Soviet officials in a tortuous variety of Communist triplethink, the U.S. would never guess that John's ultimate secret destination was Siberia. To explain his absence from Vladivostok, John told his neighbors he was being transferred to a job with a special supply mission in the Arctic Sea. Then he headed for Moscow, where Deriabin met him, installed him comfortably in a hotel room and began an intensive two-month briefing period.

From Moscow, John went to Rostock in East Germany for a stay of nine months, long enough to establish a new identity as a purchasing agent of the Soviet fishing monopoly there. In Rostock he was to act the part of an inefficient official, lazy, overtalkative, fond of drink

CONTINUED



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## AGENT'S TALE CONTINUED

and women. At last (according to the plan) he would be recalled to Moscow for disciplining—but instead would “flee” to the western sector of Germany. Once he got there he was to describe himself to U.S. officials not as a Siberian but as a Ukrainian. This, the Soviet officials deviously reasoned, would enable him to ask for U.S. intelligence duty in Siberia—because the Ukraine obviously would be a hot spot for him and Siberia is about as far from the Ukraine as a man can get and still be inside Russia.

After all this elaborate scheming John was picked up by U.S. officials shortly after he reached the West, and the whole structure of the Soviet plan was exposed.

That did not keep the State Security from trying similar plans again. A few years ago newspapers in the U.S. and Europe carried accounts of the flight to freedom of a former slave laborer who had endured months of privation making his way to the West from a camp in Siberia. This man, whose identity is being kept secret by Western officials, was a fake and was eventually taken into custody. Actually he *had* escaped from the labor camp guards, but with the connivance of the State Security, in accordance with a plan Deriabin's office had been working on for years. On his “flight” through the Soviet Union and its satellites, intelligence officers met him at convenient points to give him food, clothes and directions to the next point of contact. When Deriabin heard of this man's flight to the West he was incredulous. In Moscow he had argued that no sane person would ever believe the man's “escape” story.

Even more closely guarded than the schemes for planting agents were the preparations for sending outright “illegals” into foreign countries. An “illegal,” in Soviet intelligence lingo, is a State Security agent who works inside a foreign country without any sort of diplomatic protection—in other words, a professional spy. An illegal's identity and his communications with Moscow are matters of the highest security, usually entrusted to a single officer in headquarters. One such illegal was Colonel Abel, the convicted Soviet spy who was caught in Manhattan two years ago. Although Abel was unquestionably doing active espionage, some illegals are sent into foreign countries with orders to stay inactive, sometimes for years, until Moscow notifies them to start working. Meanwhile they develop cover occupations and try to merge with the life of the local population.

One of Deriabin's last jobs while he was in Moscow was to supervise the training of two such “cold storage” agents, as they are called, as part of a project which offers an astonishing insight into Soviet planning. The two illegals were expert conversationalists in German and English. They were ordered to East Germany, where they were to pose as an Austrian and his English wife. They were to set up a business and then wait for further orders—which would be forthcoming only if East Germany passed out of Soviet control! In that event they would immediately go into action as operating spies.

### A welcome chance to transfer

**A**SSIGNMENTS in Western Europe were viewed as plums by officers in State Security. (One of Deriabin's friends made enough money selling bedspreads he had bought in Rome to be able to build his family a small villa outside Moscow.) In 1953 when Deriabin was given a chance to leave Moscow headquarters and go to Vienna, he jumped at it. As a former Okhrana officer, he should never have been transferred outside the country, but his superior officer in Moscow, Colonel Kovalov, who was himself being transferred to Vienna, managed to get Deriabin assigned with him in the confusion of the post-Stalin days. There was a little back-scratching involved too. Deriabin, as Communist secretary for the Austro-German section, repaid Kovalov by giving him a glowing recommendation in the Party records.

In Vienna it was Deriabin's chief job to watch not Austrians or Americans or other foreigners, but Russians. It was his duty to investigate any suspicion of disloyalty on the part of any Soviet citizen in Vienna, from the ambassador down. One adverse report from Deriabin would be enough to send the average Soviet officer packing to Moscow, on his way to anything from a reprimand to a long term in prison as an “enemy of the people.” Even if such a man successfully established his innocence, Deriabin's unfavorable report would prevent his ever again getting a job of importance in the U.S.S.R. Deriabin also was responsible for some direct counterintelligence—seeing what the other side was doing.

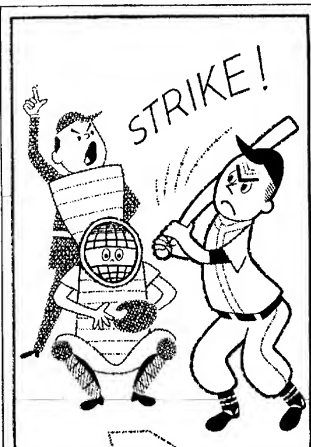
Deriabin was one of 71 State Security officers in Vienna. Each had a “cover” job to mask his identity as an intelligence operative—some within the embassy, others as officials of Soviet-run businesses in Austria, or as newspaper correspondents. Major Deriabin was given a high-sounding title to approximate his State Security and Party rank: assistant to the chief administrative officer of the embassy.

Deriabin's office in the Hotel Imperial, the huge baroque building

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SOVIET RESIDENCE in Vienna was Grand Hotel, shown with sign proclaiming May Day. As security officer, Deriabin had keys to every room.

#### AGENT'S TALE CONTINUED

which the Russians used as their administrative headquarters, was a bare gray room with a large Austrian safe in the corner. The safe had only a few documents in it (Soviet embassies store all their important papers in the code room), but it contained a small arsenal of weapons: machine pistols, automatics and carbines. There were four telephones, which were kept unplugged when not in use. Since the telephone exchange was in the international sector of the city, the Russians suspected the Americans of ingenious wire-tapping schemes. One of the phones was on the regular city exchange, another led to the embassy, a third was a special intercom system for the 16 top officers in the embassy, the fourth was a direct wire to Soviet military headquarters in Baden (when using this phone, Deriabin had to give the code word of the week before starting any conversation).

Although Deriabin was not at first identified among embassy personnel as a State Security officer, the word quickly got around. As part of his work he used to listen to the broadcasts of the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe. One day the man next door, the chief of the embassy's finance section, reported him for this anti-Soviet activity. Nothing was done about the report (the officer to whom it was made was one of Deriabin's agents) and the finance officer continued to look angrily at his new floormate. Then suddenly his attitude changed and suspicion gave way to groveling servility. Deriabin knew that one more of his fellow citizens had tumbled to his thin "cover." But though most of the embassy personnel soon realized Deriabin was a State Security official, few were aware that his duties involved their own day-to-day surveillance.

#### A man of many names

IN his work Deriabin dealt with a number of agents, taking care that each knew him by a different name. By keeping his various identities carefully compartmentalized he was able to prevent his agents from comparing notes about him and his activities. He also had a code name by which he received communications from Moscow—plus his real name, by which he was known in the embassy. Deriabin's agents were planted in key spots. Most embassy officials lived in the Grand Hotel and had to sign in with the duty officer if they came home after the curfew hour of 10 p.m. All duty officers were Deriabin's men. So were the chief of the communications section, the lieutenant in charge of the embassy motor pool and the officer in charge of the embassy garage. Through them Deriabin could keep close track of the movements of any member of the embassy staff. Sometimes this surveillance reached ridiculous lengths. For example, while the agent Feoktistov was watching certain Austrian contacts, another Deriabin operative named Nekrasov was watching Feoktistov.

Deriabin did not hesitate to use his intramural network of agents to straighten out occasional clashes of authority. One occurred with his nominal boss, the embassy's chief administrative officer, Major General Sergei Maslov. Maslov, a bibulous Red Army oldtimer, objected to Deriabin's overriding his own authority and took out his spite by petty harassments: interfering with the work of State Security noncoms, allocating them the worst rooms and making them use the worst cars for their work. After the ambassador had dressed down Maslov once for his interference, without noticeable effect, Deriabin took steps of his own. He asked one of his stellar agents, the chief telephone operator at the Grand Hotel, if Maslov had any girl

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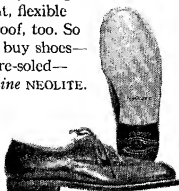
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## AGENT'S TALE CONTINUED

friends whom he was in the habit of visiting. The operator knew of one, a personable stenographer named Katrina. Deriabin ordered the operator to notify him the next time the couple made a rendezvous.

So it was that on a certain evening, Major Deriabin hung up his telephone, took a camera out of his closet and marched upstairs to the room where Katrina and Maslov were "visiting." After one loud knock, he opened the door with his passkey. There was a long, embarrassed silence as Katrina and the general scrambled to their feet. "Well, General," said Deriabin at last, "I think we had better talk about this downstairs. Highly irregular procedure..."

The very next day the State Security chauffeurs received by direct order of General Maslov the pick of the embassy motor pool: a new Czech Tatra and a highly prized 1949 Buick.

As embassy security officer, Deriabin viewed with suspicion the slightest contact of any Soviet citizen with foreigners. To investigate such cases Deriabin's section recruited amateur informants from among the subject's close personal friends. Sometimes these informants were formally hired as State Security agents; sometimes they were merely questioned. Either way, the informant had to take an oath never to reveal anything he might learn about the work of the State Security in Austria.

It did not take much to get an investigation started, and in this respect high officials and minor employees got equal treatment. During his time in Vienna, Deriabin investigated: a Soviet businessman named Okreshidze, who had been heard to say that it would not be difficult for someone in his position to transfer a million Austrian schillings to a Swiss account and escape to the West; a secretary who suddenly began sending home gifts that she obviously could not afford (she proved to be a shoplifter and wound up being sent home herself); and the chief of the embassy's foreign political section, Andrei Timoschenko, who had long been suspected of an unseemly liking for the West.

Visitors from the U.S.S.R. came in for particularly close scrutiny. Deriabin was ordered to put extra close surveillance on the veteran Soviet literary propagandist, Ilya Ehrenburg, when he stopped in for the Soviet-sponsored World Peace Council in November 1953. Ehrenburg is known for his contacts with the West. "We have a big file on him," said a visiting official, "so keep a good watch."

As the months passed, there began to be something ironical about Deriabin's position as the Russian who watched other Russians. For ultimately the one who most needed watching was Deriabin. He was in some ways a typical product of Soviet society. He had grown up believing that the ideals of Marx and Lenin were destined to produce a Utopia. But when he got close to the Utopia's leadership, he began to experience deep disillusionment. He now knew that the secret police apparatus, functioning on a mixture of fear, suspicion and force, was the Soviet regime's principal source of power.

In Vienna the contrast between the relative freedom and riches of life in the West and the meanness and corruption of his job began to weigh more and more heavily on him. In Moscow, at foreign intelligence headquarters, he had been relatively detached from the viciousness of the system. But since coming to Vienna he had become a part of it—personally participating in the lie that enabled the U.S.S.R. to recruit and hold its agents. For example, one of his agents, a Western European citizen, was married to a Russian officer who had been recalled to the homeland. She would never see him again, but she did not know it. Deriabin, who did, had to keep her working for him with the promise that soon, any day now, she and her husband would be restored to each other. The fact was that her officer had been sent home because he had married her, an outsider.

In October of 1953, at a WFTU "labor" congress in Vienna, Deriabin met a Spanish Communist delegate who had slipped out of his country illegally so that he could attend. "What a great country the Soviet Union is," the Spanish delegate exclaimed. "I hope in Spain someday we can build a fine socialist country like that." "Ah, yes," said Deriabin, who was at the time having a high Soviet official, a delegate to the congress, shadowed on the Kremlin's orders. "Yes, you must fight to achieve that. It's a great life we have in the Soviet Union." It was daily becoming harder to give the right answers.

On the morning of Feb. 14, 1954, Colonel Kovalev called Deriabin at 5 a.m. and told him to start an immediate investigation of a reported defection. A Soviet official named Anatoli Skachkov had been reported missing by his frightened wife. He had come home drunk



**GENERAL MASLOV** got in Deriabin's way, was trapped by Deriabin in room with stenographer.

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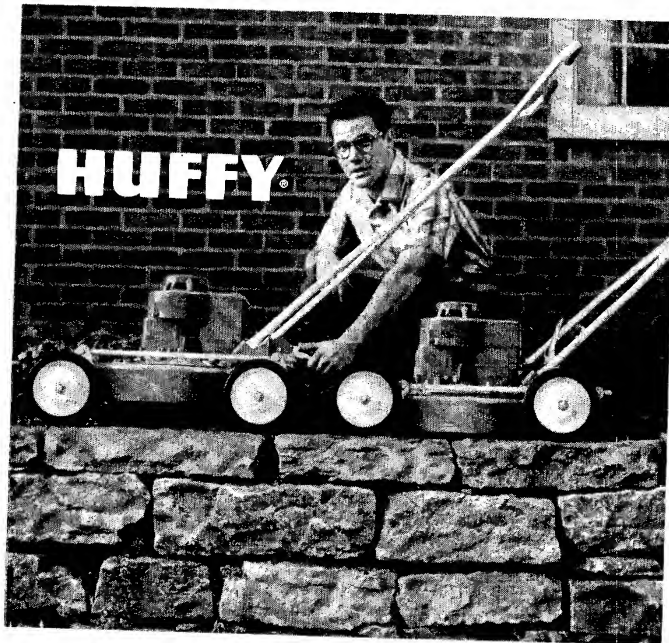
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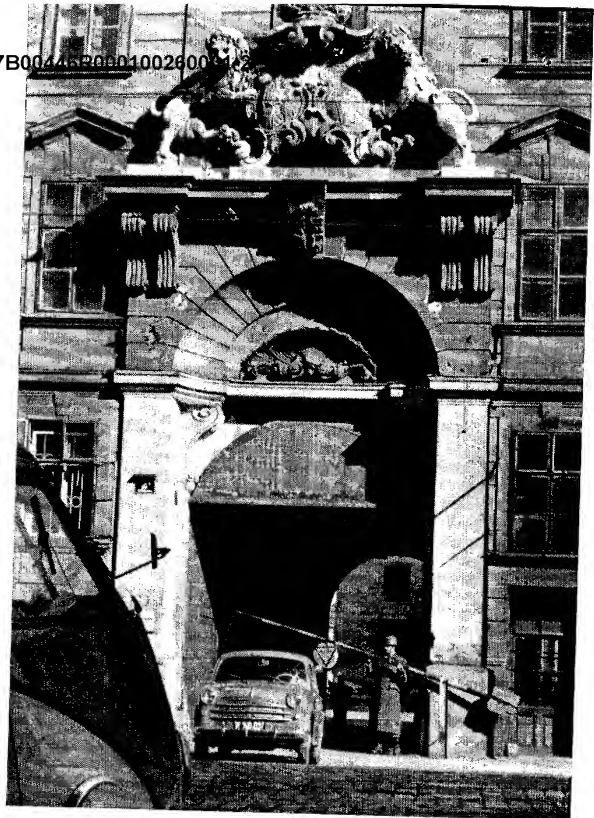
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DERIABIN'S REFUGE when he defected in 1954 was the U.S. military police headquarters in Vienna. Building is now an Austrian army barracks.

## AGENT'S TALE CONTINUED

after an evening on the town with a visiting State Security officer and had bluntly told his wife he was leaving to join the Americans. He had packed some clothes and left. Deriabin spent the next 24 hours working on the case. It interested him. Had Skachkov really defected, or had his meeting with the State Security man been the prelude to a rigged defection leading to a counterespionage assignment? If he had defected, where was he now, and how did he feel? What was it like to leave behind the Soviet state and all it stood for?

At 3:30 p.m. on Feb. 15, Deriabin walked out of Skachkov's apartment house, still not much further along in his investigation, and strolled thoughtfully toward the food market at the edge of the French sector. He was slowly reaching a tremendous decision. It was a steel-gray, chilly day. At one of the market's open stalls he stopped and ordered a sausage and a bottle of beer. Then he hailed a taxi and rode to a large department store near the border of the Soviet and U.S. sectors. He stood on the sidewalk and looked up and down the street, trying to get his bearings in the unfamiliar American sector. A streetcleaner was passing by, pushing his long-handled broom along the gutter. "Pardon me," said Deriabin suddenly, "where is the American Kommandatura?"

On Feb. 21, 1954 the United Press carried this dispatch from Vienna: "Soviet authorities asked Austrian police to join the hunt today for two Russian factory officials who vanished after a drunken nightclub spree and may try to escape to the West." The Soviet announcement named Skachkov and Deriabin as the two "factory officials."

Soviet troops had been ordered into position astride every possible escape route leading from the city. They were too late. Barely 24 hours after his escape, Peter Deriabin was in the U.S. zone of Austria, safe forever. So, for that matter, was his onetime quarry, Anatoli Skachkov.

## GUARDING THE KREMLIN

Next week's instalment reports Peter Deriabin's experiences in the Okhrana, the hard-bitten corps that guards Russia's leaders in the Kremlin. It tells of debauches by top officials, of quick death for hapless citizens who crossed the path of the Kremlin cops—and of the time Deriabin stood watch over Dwight Eisenhower with a loaded pistol.